

# Identifying Symptoms of Illness

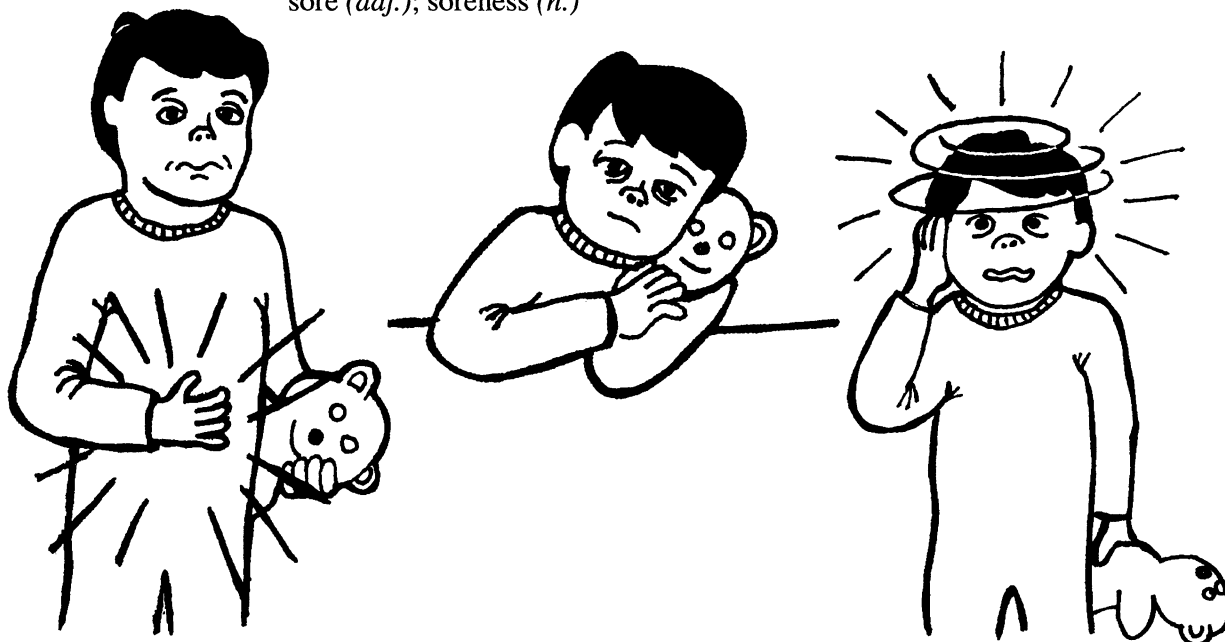
## 1 How Do You Feel?

**Directions:** Review the symptoms and illustrations below. Act out the symptoms or describe them using simple English terms. Which of the symptoms below have you experienced? What do you think causes these symptoms?

When we are sick, we have many symptoms. Symptoms are signs that help us and our doctors understand why we are sick. When the doctor knows what our symptoms are and what causes them, she or he can recommend ways to get better.

dizzy (*adj.*); dizziness (*n.*)  
nausea (*n.*); nauseated (*adj.*)  
headache(s) (*n.*)  
stomachache(s) (*n.*)  
diarrhea (*n.*)  
itch (*n.*)  
rash(es) (*n.*)  
irritable (*adj.*); irritability (*n.*)  
pain(s) (*n.*)  
sore (*adj.*); soreness (*n.*)

cough (*v.*)  
sneeze (*v.*)  
fatigue (*n.*)  
tired (*adj.*)  
sore throat(s) (*n.*)  
cramp(s) (*n.*)  
fever(s) (*n.*)  
vomit (*v.*)  
ache (*v.*); ache(s) (*n.*)



## 2

# Complete the Sentences

**Directions:** Complete the following sentences using the symptoms listed above.

1. I have a cold. I am \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. My head is spinning. I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. I ate something bad. Now I feel \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. My muscles hurt. They are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. My temperature is 101° F. I have a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Nothing is going right. I am grumpy and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. These red marks on my skin must be a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# The Mysterious Illness

**Directions:** Read or act out the following passage.

Mr. Lopez has a three-year-old daughter, Lisa. Lisa is sick. Mr. Lopez is worried about Lisa. He wants to know what is wrong. He took her to one doctor two months ago. The doctor did not think Lisa was sick. Now Mr. Lopez is going to a new doctor. A friend told him this doctor was a very good doctor. Mr. Lopez and Lisa are waiting in the examination room. The doctor enters.

*Doctor:* Hello. How are you?

*Mr. Lopez:* I'm fine. Thanks.

*Doctor:* How is Lisa?

*Mr. Lopez:* Doctor, I know something is wrong. Lisa used to be a happy little girl. Now she is irritable. She always has a lot of stomach-aches.

*Doctor:* When did these symptoms begin?

*Mr. Lopez:* Two months ago, I brought her to a doctor. That doctor said Lisa had a cold. I am worried. I think there is something wrong. Can you help us?

*Doctor:* I will try. Lisa's symptoms are very common. Let me ask you some questions. Does Lisa go to a daycare center?

*Mr. Lopez:* No.

*Doctor:* Where do you live, Mr. Lopez?

*Mr. Lopez:* We rent an apartment on Oak Street. It is in a beautiful old house.

*Doctor:* How old is the house?

*Mr. Lopez:* It is more than 60 years old. We like the big rooms. Is this important?

*Doctor:* Yes, it is. Old houses contain lead paint. It is possible that Lisa has lead paint poisoning. I need to test her blood. Lead poisoning can be very dangerous.

*Mr. Lopez:* But, doctor, Lisa does not eat paint. I vacuum the paint chips all the time. My wife and I keep the house very clean.

*Doctor:* The problem is often lead paint dust. The dust gets on the toys and fingers. Children put everything in their mouths. I will do a blood test. The results will be ready next week. Today, I want you to wash all of Lisa's toys with soap and water. Wash her hands before she eats. I will see you next week.

## 4

## Vocabulary

**Directions:** Review the vocabulary words below and define each using simple English terms.

sick (*adj.*)  
 examine (*v.*)  
 symptom(s) (*n.*)  
 irritable (*adj.*)  
 demanding (*adj.*)  
 poison (*v.*)  
 test (*v.*); test (*n.*)  
 illness (*n.*)  
 doctor(s) (*n.*)

examination room(s) (*n.*)  
 scream (*v.*)  
 complain (*v.*)  
 check (*v.*); checkup(s) (*n.*)  
 lead (*n.*)  
 blood (*n.*)  
 mysterious (*adj.*)  
 diagnosis(ses) (*n.*)

## 5

## Review and Discuss

**Directions:** Review “The Mysterious Illness” and answer the following questions.

1. What are Lisa’s symptoms? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. When did these symptoms begin? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
3. Why does the doctor ask a lot of questions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
4. What does the doctor think the problem is? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. Where does the lead come from? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## 6

## Topics for Discussion

**Directions:** Discuss your experiences of being sick and going to the doctor. Answer the following questions.

1. When was the last time you were sick? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
2. What were your symptoms? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you like going to the doctor? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
4. Do you have a regular doctor? Where is this doctor? Is it difficult to make an appointment with your doctor? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you feel comfortable talking to your doctor? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

# 7

## What Do the Results Mean?

**Directions:** Read or act out the following passage.

It is one week later. The results of Lisa's blood test are ready. Mr. Lopez is waiting for the doctor in his office. The doctor arrives.

*Doctor:* Hello, Mr. Lopez.

*Mr. Lopez:* Hello, Doctor.

*[The doctor sits down across from Mr. Lopez.]*

*Doctor:* Mr. Lopez. Now I understand the problem. Lisa's blood test shows that she has some lead in her blood.

*Mr. Lopez:* What does that mean?

*Doctor:* That means you and your wife must make some changes at home. We need to be sure that Lisa is safe.

*Mr. Lopez:* What can we do?

*Doctor:* There are simple things you can do. These are good habits. This will stop Lisa from getting more lead in her blood. First, I want you to wash the floor and windowsills. It is very important to wash all the toys in the house with soap and water. Lisa needs to eat well. She should eat food with iron, calcium, and vitamin C. Spinach, milk, and orange juice are good for her.

*Mr. Lopez:* Of course. My wife and I will do all these things.

*Doctor:* Does Lisa have brothers and sisters?

*Mr. Lopez:* Yes, Doctor. We have two other children.

*Doctor:* I will need to see Lisa and your other children in one month. We will test all the children to be sure they are safe.

**Note to Student:** For more information on ways to reduce the risk of lead in homes, see the units "Preparing and Storing Food" and "Making Water Safe to Drink."

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## Vocabulary

**Directions:** Review the vocabulary words below and define each using simple English terms.

disease(s) (*n.*)

remove (*v.*)

landlord(s) (*n.*)

learn (*v.*)

contact (*v.*)

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## Review and Discuss

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**Directions:** Review “What Do the Results Mean?” and answer the following questions.

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1. What did the doctor learn? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What should Lisa eat? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How many children are in the Lopez family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What does the doctor want Mr. Lopez to do at home? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you know anyone with lead poisoning? Describe what happened to him or her. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**10**

## Act Out the Scene

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**Directions:** Using the information below, role-play a scene between doctor and patient. Act out the scene in front of the others or work in pairs and practice the dialogue as partners, each taking turns playing doctor and patient.

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This activity will help you feel comfortable talking to doctors and nurses about your health and about lead poisoning. Some doctors do not ask their patients about lead poisoning. Therefore, you need to be prepared to ask questions and tell your doctor or nurse what you are worried about. Then, your doctor or nurse may be able to better help you and your children.

*Doctor:* Your patient is sick. Ask him or her to describe the symptoms. What questions can you ask the patient?

*Patient:* You are not feeling well. Describe your symptoms to the doctor. Tell the doctor how you feel. You may even want to predict your illness.

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## Writing Assignment

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**Directions:** Using the questions below as a guide, write about a time when you were sick. Carefully describe your symptoms, your trip to the doctor (if you went), and what you did to get better.

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Describe a time when you were sick. What happened? What was it like? What were your symptoms? Did you go to the doctor? What did you tell the doctor? What did you do to get better?

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**Note to Teacher:** Consider inviting a local health professional to visit the class and discuss the symptoms of lead poisoning with students.

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